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EXCURSION TO MISSOURI.

HAVING proceeded on a business excursion to the United States, I had occasion to travel westwards to St Louis, a city on the banks of the Mississippi, forming the largest in the state of Missouri. I knew that American towns spring speedily to large dimensions, but was not prepared for the great size and solidly settled appearance of St Louis.

Looking down from the roof of a lofty building, one can hardly believe that the vast spectacle spread out before him represents the growth of only three-quarters of a century. The town looks as old as London. The smoke has tinged the walls a venerable dingy hue, while the grouping of buildings is as picturesque and varied as that of a continental city. From the banks of the Mississippi, on ridge after ridge, rise acres of solidly built houses; vast manufactories, magazines of commerce, long avenues, bordered with splendid residences, and a labyrinth of railways all terminating here, tend to increase our astonishment; whilst the clang of machinery and the whirl of myriad wagon-wheels strike upon the ear, convincing us that we are amongst a busy and active people. The streets are thronged with hard-working but uncouth labourers; dozens of steamers are shrieking their notes of arrival and departure; the ferries are choked with traffic; and across the river, the limitless West is open to our vision. This city has leaped into new life since the war, and has more than doubled its population, which in 1873 reached 450,000; whilst in 1858 it had scarcely 200,000; and in 1835, it had only 8000 inhabitants. The city boundaries extend twelve miles along the ridges, branching from the water-sheds between the Missouri, the Merrimac, and the Mississippi rivers, flanked by prairies richly studded with groves and vineyards. Rows of steam-boats, a mile and half in length, may be seen on the Mississippi, which can convey merchandise a thousand miles from the sea to the interior of the country.

To Englishmen, there is something very extraordinary in the bustling way of doing business, in the odd intermixture of races, and in the deafening

shouts of coarse ribaldry that are heard in all the large towns in the southern and western states of America. Nor can we be surprised at this, when we consider what a heterogeneous multitude they are. It is often supposed that persons of English origin predominate in the states of America; but this is a great mistake; the Germans always outnumber the English emigrants. Huge ferry-boats ply constantly across the river; these, however, are soon to be but memories of the past, for the new bridge has just been completed, and trains can now cross the Mississippi to a grand union dépôt in the centre of St Louis.

The writer of this arrived at St Louis a few weeks before the opening of the bridge just alluded to. He had to visit the 'Iron County,' and, as a preliminary step, had first to cross the Mississippi River, from East St Louis to St Louis on the west bank. He found a crowd of a motley and cosmopolitan character awaiting transportation. There was the German emigrant, flat-capped, and dressed in coarse black, with his quaintly attired wife, and rosy children clinging to him; the tall and angular Texan drover, with his defiant glance; the 'poor white,' from some far southern state, with his rifle clasped in his lean hand, looking with astonishment at the wonderful displays of wealth around him; the excursion party, just arrived from the east, with maps and guide-books, and heaps of luggage; little groups of English tourists, with their mysterious hampers and packets; the tired and ill-uniformed company of troops, 'on transfer' to some remote frontier fortress; the smart merchant, in his carriage, with his elegantly dressed Negro driver standing by the restive horses; American 'Cockneys,' with Havana cigars in their mouths, as well as the slang of half-a-dozen capitals; Negroes in hundreds, whose greasy skins created anything but a pleasant sensation in the olfactory nerves. Then, on the road, was an unending procession of wagons, loaded with coal, forcing their way from the ferry-boats up the bank to the streets of St Louis, the ragged Negro drivers urging on the plunging and kicking mules with frantic shouts. Added to this wild

tumult were the lumber wagon-trains, laden with iron or copper, wearily making their way to the boats; the loungers about the curb-stones singing rude plantation songs in a Babel of languages.

The main iron region of Missouri is situated in the south-east and southern portions of the state, and, taking the Arkansas branch of railway from St Louis, we soon came to what is called the 'Iron County.' Our line ran along the western banks of the Mississippi, and on this giddy height we had a good view of the fertile country, and here and there we saw rich deposits of ironstone being unearthed. We travelled thus until we came to a little rural station called Bismarck, and then, after a short pleasant ride, we arrived at the 'Iron Mountain,' eighty miles from St Louis; and the wildest ideas of extravagance can never exceed the reality of this natural wonder. The mountain, which rises rather abruptly from a beautiful valley, is land-locked, and was covered at this time with abundant crops of wheat, oats, and Indian corn. The mountain was originally rather more than two hundred feet high, and its base covers an area of five hundred acres. It is composed almost exclusively of iron in its purest form, cropping up to the very surface, one solid mass of ore, yielding seventy per cent. of iron. In the deep cuts, and along the mountain-sides, more than a thousand men were at work, amongst whom Irishmen, Swedes, and Germans predominated. This regiment of labourers worked systematically in gangs hammering at the ore, which they seemed to displace and remove with little trouble, after it had been once blasted. They are supposed to load one hundred and twenty-five carts, carrying ten tons each, daily, and to supply two furnaces of large capacity, established at the base of the mountain. A century of hammering at the hill-sides will not bring the mountain of iron level with the valley.

The French and Spaniards, who were the early possessors of the soil, appear not to have been at all aware of the value of such a property. The first inheritor, Joseph Pratte, obtained it by a grant from the Spanish governor in 1797. Pratte's grant comprised some twenty thousand arpents, or seventeen thousand English acres, and from his hands it became the property of Van Doren, Pease, & Co., who were recognised as the Iron Mountain Company in 1837. Congress having confirmed the Spanish grants, the property has been transferred several times. For many years the investments of the original companies did not pay, and the investors were sneered at as guilty of an act of folly. But in those days there were no railways, and the ore had to be conveyed forty-five miles in carts over bad roads to the ancient town of St Genevieve. But when pig-iron became in great demand, and fetched eighty-five dollars per ton, there was no lack of energy in examining the real resources of the mountain; and since 1862, the company now in possession has mined millions of tons of ore. At one time the ore was pronounced too rich to work, but it now forms the iron for some of the principal railways in the southern and western states.

A very short distance from the mineral mountain are two small towns, called respectively 'Iron Mountain' and 'Irondale.' Finding a comfortable inn at the latter place, we determined to rest

there, and take a view of the immense furnaces erected for melting the iron, which are kept going night and day. These I found in 'full blast,' pouring out the molten metal, which, properly manipulated by bands of workmen, formed the cold hard bars which are one day to be rolled into rails for new railways now being formed. To me, the spectacle was nothing new. The chief interest lay in seeing such gigantic operations carried on so near the centre of the American continent.

In the Iron County, the whole region is rich in iron ore and other minerals. A few miles below Iron Mountain rises Pilot Knob, a stately peak, towering far above the lovely Ozark range, which surrounds it in every direction. Both here and on Shepherd's Mountain great quantities of ore are annually extracted. It is the boast of the people in Missouri that Iron County, in which lie Shepherd, Arcadia, and Bogy Mountains, in addition to the Iron Mountain, contains more iron than any equal area in the known world. From this valley, more than one hundred thousand tons of iron have been shipped since the formation of the Pilot Knob Iron Company.

We had thus seen where the ore was produced; and we wended our way back to St Louis, and the next day visited the suburban ward of Carondelet. The drive there from the city took us past the arsenal, where government now and then has a few troops, and we passed by many a pretty mansion, until we arrived in the dusty street of a prosaic manufacturing town on the bank of the Mississippi. Descending toward the water-side, we found every available space crowded with mammoth iron and zinc furnaces, with immense structures of iron, wood, and glass, in which half-naked men, their bodies smeared with perspiration and coal-dust, were engaged wheeling about blazing masses of metal, or guiding the pliant iron bars through rollers and moulds, or cooling their heated faces and arms in buckets of water brought up fresh from the stream. Here, in a zinc furnace, half-a-dozen Irishmen were driving the long puddling-rods, which they thrust into the seventy-times-seven heated furnaces; the green and yellowish flames from the metal flashing on their pale and withered countenances, gave them an almost unearthly expression. Farther on, the masons were toiling at the brickwork of a new blast-furnace, which already reared its tall towers a hundred feet above the Mississippi shore. Not far from this we saw the flaming chimney of the quaint old Carondelet furnace—the first built in this section of the country. Then we lingered for hours in immense establishments, such as the South St Louis or Vulcan Iron-works, and we fancied they must be the growth of many years, until we were told that nearly every establishment had been created since the war. The Vulcan Iron-works, that now employs twelve hundred men in its blast-furnaces and rolling-mills, spreads over seventeen acres of land, boasts six hundred thousand dollars' worth of machinery, and has two furnaces smelting twenty-five thousand tons of iron annually; whilst its rolling-mill can turn out forty-five thousand tons of rail in twelve months; and yet, in the year 1870, there was not a brick laid on the premises. Dozens of barges are always moored in the river, waiting for freight from the mines and from the coal districts of Illinois.

England must now look to her laurels; for we

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were told that these manufactories will be multiplied every year, and that St Louis may ere long be the centre of a region producing as many million tons of pig-iron annually as are now produced in the whole of Great Britain. The people in this part of the world believe that the commonwealth of Missouri is to be the England of the future. The ore is both plentiful and cheap; and the cost of labour is to-day but a trifle more than it is in the furnaces in Wales. Thus the American iron-masters, it is thought, will be enabled to undersell those of England, and they can at least supply the wants of the United States. Our own observations would lead us to the same conclusion, were it not that the Americans are short of one great commodity, and that is 'capital.' Money is everywhere scarce; the paper currency does not work well. Those who imagine that capital is the enemy of labour, should go to the iron districts of Missouri, and there they will see what the want of capital means, and also hear how men are appreciated who come with plenty of money in their pockets, wherewith to give employment to workmen, and develop the resources of the country.

Before we took our departure from St Louis, *en route* for England, we had many pleasant walks around the Missourian city, in the cool of the evening. It is emphatically the railway centre of the Mississippi Valley, where five-sixths of the wheat is grown that is exported to this country, and almost all the cotton and tobacco is also produced there. Fourteen of the most important railways have their termini in this city, and at least thirty others touch upon the borders. In 1873, they received within the city, by railroads and river-routes, over four millions of tons freight, and shipped over two millions of tons. Many and mighty are the buildings associated with commerce, and every day improvements are being made, which will eventually make this one of the greatest cities in the United States.

It is rather a drawback to Missouri that summer at St Louis is exceedingly hot, though nothing stops a Missourian merchant from attending to his business. At ten o'clock, clad only in the thinnest of linen, and with a palm-leaf fan in his hand, he seeks his office, looks over his correspondence, answers his letters, &c., fanning himself the whole time. At eleven o'clock, the sun becomes withering, but the St Louis merchant coolly dons his broad-brim hat, and proceeds to the Exchange, into which the thirteen hundred members vainly try each day to cramp themselves; he makes his way to the corner allotted to his branch of trade, and patiently swelters there until one o'clock. In this one room, every species of business is transacted; one corner is devoted to flour, a second to grain, a third to provisions, a fourth to cotton, a fifth to hardware, &c. A whirlwind of fans astonished the stranger; people mop their foreheads and swing their palm-leaves hysterically as they conclude their bargains; and as they saunter away together to lunch, they still vigorously mop and fan. The tumult and shouting are not so great as in many other large American cities, but the activity is the same. The heat is so great that the messengers and others similarly engaged have to go every now and then to refresh themselves at great cans filled with sulphur-water. In a few years, however, the magnificent new Exchange building, which will in many respects be the

finest on the American continent, is to be opened, and trade will not only be classified, but there will be greater facilities for public transactions than at present, and the interior will be better shaded from the sun's rays.

MY ADVENTURES IN THE FRENCH WAR.

CHAPTER V.

THE narrative which I have been able to carry on till now as an eye-witness, must be for a time interrupted. On the 13th of December, when each day was getting more and more eventful, and those who were taking an active part in the war were becoming more anxious as to results, I found myself laid prostrate from that terrible epidemic that was sweeping off so many victims in our army—small-pox.

For some days I had struggled desperately against the progress of the disease, but in vain; and one morning, as we were retracing our steps towards Bourges, the moment arrived when my strength gave way. All I cared for now was to be allowed to lie down and rest anywhere—it did not signify where, provided I was not obliged to move again. This desire might have been easily granted; and considering the season, and more than usually rigorous winter, I might have had my wish carried out beyond my fancy, had it not been for the kindness of my general, who had me placed in his own carriage, and conveyed to the château of Chambon, seventeen miles from Bourges. There he knew I should receive all the attention I required, and there I was left. For eight days I was in a high fever, and delirious. There was no medical man to be had; all were busy in the hospitals. So, after acknowledging what I owe to a kind Providence who watched over me, I must not forget the affectionate assiduity of my own servant, a young well-to-do peasant of the Jura, who never lost sight of me day or night till I was better. Add to this, the hospitable care of the Seigneur de Chambon, who, from the first moment of my arrival, united with his wife in attention to my comfort. Fruit, game, old wines, everything that could be thought of to bring me through and strengthen me, was provided willingly and cheerfully. The fever having been subdued, was followed by complete prostration, and with it came the moral suffering of finding myself alone, ignorant of what was going on in the world without, the Germans advancing rapidly, and I, through weakness, bound hand and foot, and incapable of making one movement either to resist or escape from them. I had gone through racking pain, it is true, but this was physical; how could it be compared to the torture that I was mentally undergoing at this moment! The thought, each time it occurred, of falling into the hands of my dreaded enemies, and being sent into captivity, made me spring up in bed, but it was only to fall back again, with a bitter sense of helplessness.

So time passed, and about the beginning of the new year I resolved, though in a very weak condition, to depart, with a view of joining the army of Bourbaki, which had left for Besançon and the east. A train was starting for Châlons, conveying the rear-guard of the 15th corps. I explained my position to the officer in command, and he, sympathising with me, kindly allowed me to start with them.

It was a long dreary journey, in this cold, bitter winter of 1871. We took two days and one night to move from Bourges to Besançon, a distance of eight hours in ordinary times. Fifteen miles from that town, I found my general, who, after a friendly scolding for my rashness, allowed me to remain on his staff.

It will now be necessary to explain how the 20th corps, which we saw in our last chapter sorely beaten and disorganised in the neighbourhood of Bourges, was once more in the east, again taking the field against the invaders. It had been sent with others to relieve Belfort, and, as it was expected and hoped, to draw upon itself part of the army that was pursuing Chanzy. D'Aurelle de Paladines had been dismissed from his command, after the disasters of Orleans, and his army had been placed under the orders of Bourbaki, one of the most popular generals of the French army. Still young, notwithstanding his fifty-six years of age, of a refined and brilliant mind, warm and impetuous heart, open and resolute character, Bourbaki was certainly the man best able to head such a hazardous undertaking. He had just been the involuntary hero of a romantic adventure, in which he had behaved with loyalty and disinterestedness. And we were all glad to hear that we were to be commanded by the bold chief of the Imperial Guard. It was on the 19th of December that the expedition of the east was decided upon; and on the next day Bourbaki began his movement with the 15th, 18th, 20th, and 24th corps. At first, that general had declined the honour; he was not sanguine as to its results. He felt that it was courting defeat to engage in such an enterprise. His apprehension can easily be understood, as he had, in that army of 101,000 men, scarcely 35,000 soldiers capable of carrying on a serious campaign. But an appeal had been made to his patriotism, and at last he had yielded.

These facts, or doubts, we did not know at the time; we shared the hopes, as later on we suffered from the follies, of those who had conceived this new plan; and when I joined my brother-officers, they were full of the deeds that were to be performed, of the success of the campaign opening before them, which was, according to the strategists of Tours, to be followed by the repulse of the Germans from France. I cannot enter here into the merits of Gambetta's plans. Who has not read of this sad campaign, the crowning act of so many disasters and follies, which had begun at Weissembourg, to end at Pontarlier? But the reader must excuse me if once more I enter, for the sake of lucidity, into a few explanations as to the relative positions of the two armies. Garibaldi and his band of adventurers had been left at Dijon to keep in check any force that might attack us on our rear. General Crémier's division remained isolated on the left bank of the Saône, to watch the army of succour, and protect our left flank; the 18th corps supported the right of that division; whilst the 20th corps formed the centre of that line which extended from Vesoul to Beaume-les-Dames, with the 15th and 24th corps on its right. Wender's army, on the approach of Bourbaki, had retreated, first by Gray and Vesoul, after evacuating Dijon, and was continuing his retrograde movement on Belfort, when we met him at Villersexel, a village built on a small river—the Lisonne.

At the point where the high-road, which, from

Montbozon to Lure, runs in the midst of thick covers, abruptly descends in front of Villersexel, and crosses the road that leads to the little hamlet of Petit Magny, a large house, a strong square building, flanked on both sides by sheds, rests, squatting against the rising bank. This house, painted yellow all over, with its green shutters and high-pointed red-tiled roof, seems placed there as an advanced sentry, keeping, or rather observing the long valley which stretches at its feet. It was from that farm-house that the first shot of the battle of the 9th of January was fired.

The whole army of the east was to be engaged on that day. What, early that morning, had only appeared to be simply an affair of outposts, became by noon a regular battle. A company of the 47th had been sent during the night to occupy that building. Every one had been on the look-out, and the night had been so cold, that the sentries had been doubled and changed every half-hour. Dawn had seen the hills bristling with troops, buzzing like a bee-hive. The first shot had been fired on an uhlan. The company was waiting for orders to advance and to occupy the village, which seemed to be abandoned by the enemy. It was seven, and as yet the Germans had given no signs of their presence, when an uhlan emerged from the woods on the right, and galloped towards our posts. One of the sentries sent him a bullet that put a stop to his adventurous march, and an empty saddle warned the Germans that the place was guarded.

One would have thought that this shot lighted up the *bouquet* of some grand pyrotechnic display. A deafening fusilade broke out on all sides. The woods, the hills, the houses of the village, so tranquil but a few minutes before, were now one blaze of smoke and fire.

All this was narrated to me later on, for at the time it was taking place I was comfortably squatting, up to my neck in straw, in the general's carriage, which, with the rest of the baggage-train, was in the rear. General Ségard had made it one of his conditions for my remaining on his staff that I should travel thus, taking no violent exercise until I had completely recovered; so I was quietly dozing, when I heard an order given for us to fall back at once on the village we had occupied during the night.

'What's up?' I inquired, putting my head out of the window, from the officer who had brought the order.

'Your division is engaged,' was the short reply; and then, for the first time, I heard the distant angry growling of the artillery. I did not hesitate. How could I remain there, quietly listening to that voice, which seemed to call me! So I ordered my horse, and mounted it, not without some difficulty, and notwithstanding the entreaties of my servant, who went so far, in his desire to stop me, as to warn me that the general would have me tried by a court-martial for disobeying his orders. But on seeing that his entreaties, prayers, and threats were of no avail, the faithful fellow jumped on my spare horse, and followed.

As I emerged from the wood, I suddenly came upon a plateau, from which I beheld the whole panorama of the battle.

It was seven o'clock; the sun was just rising. Right in front of me, protected by ranges of low

hills, stretched a long valley, the woods and thickets standing out in dark relief against the pure snowy covering, which extended as far as the eye could reach. On a height, far away in the distance, I descried a village church, its steeple shining cheerily and peaceably out, as its zinc-covered roof caught and sent back the bright glances of a January sun; while farther up, and more in accordance with the scenes that were taking place, on a craggy height, frowning down upon us in sullen silence, could be seen the heavy outline of a feudal château, its peaked towers becoming strongly marked against the clear cold morning sky. At the foot of the hill from which I made my observations, lay Villersexel, the key of the position. On our right, a large house was burning; the Germans had set fire to it before evacuating it, a few hours before. Puffs of thick and acrid smoke issued from it with low cracklings. On both sides were thick woods, behind which the Germans had placed their batteries, answering ours shot for shot; between each round, the rattling of the musketry filled the intervals.

I was thinking whether I should join the general or not, when I saw the company of the 47th issuing from the farm-house. The temptation was too much for me to resist, on seeing Boisson, my former captain, bravely leading on his men; a few minutes brought me to his side.

Preceded by two bugles, sounding merrily our favourite march, we crossed at the double the space which separated us from the first houses of Villersexel. Like one man, the company penetrated into the park of the Château de Grammont, usually peaceful and beautiful, but then a scene of dreadful havoc. The fusilade was incessant, so furious, so wild, so unbroken, that one would have thought batteries of mitrailleuses were before us. The projectiles ricochetted from tree to tree, with the hissing and screeching of a thousand steam-whistles. Notwithstanding all this, ours advanced, replying at random against an invisible host; for the Germans had changed their tactics; it was no more a rear-guard covering a retreat, that we had before us, it was the whole of their army, which, having retraced their steps, was waiting for us, and receiving us with due honours. During this, the other companies of the 47th, some *Moblots*, and the *vétérans* of the 78th had thrown themselves on the village, and dislodged the enemy at the point of the bayonet from the park and from the houses in the vicinity. We were then literally fighting hand to hand, and one could hear, notwithstanding the din of the fusilade, the thud of the bullets as they penetrated the flesh. The approaches of Villersexel were cleared; we could see the Germans escaping from the last houses, whilst some others were retreating in groups, making their way, still fighting, towards the château.

They fought well, emerging from every street, and rapidly firing upon us from every corner. They had even two pieces of artillery behind a barricade, which swept the approaches of the bridge. The fifth company had scarcely thirty men left, and it was time to fall back before we were entirely surrounded. Five minutes later, we should have been caught as in a rat-trap. We retreated as far as a little wood, and a dozen men remained behind a battered wall fifty yards from the first houses. There I left them, and

went in search of General Ségard. My servant, who had watched all my movements, came and met me with my horse. It was then three o'clock, and I was sent to warn some of our troops of the arrival of the 18th corps on the left, and that the general attack was to commence.

'You have come just in time,' said the colonel commanding one of the regiments holding the position; 'and if your glass is better than mine, you will perhaps be able to tell me to what corps that black mass belongs that is moving along that road.'

The thick smoke of the enemy's gun, and the heavy mist that hung over it, hid for a time that part of the hill through which ran the road alluded to. When this had sufficiently cleared away, to allow me to see what was attracting our attention—'Artillery moving in our direction,' I said, looking through my field-glass.

'Whose?'

'Cannot say; too far off; but I shall soon ascertain,' and I made towards it. Arriving at about five hundred yards, I looked again. The dark blue coats were all I could discern of the uniforms. Nearer and nearer I got. If friends, they will hail me, I thought; if foes, they will fire. At last I was observed, and, as I anticipated, signs were made, but friendly, such as waving the hand, reversing arms. Still I was not satisfied, till a small French flag was waved, and that reassured me. I was not aware of the trick.

I rode back to the regiment, and told the colonel not to fire, as it was a battery of the 18th corps, and requested him to be ready to support it, if necessary. Scarcely had I uttered these words, when whiz! came a shell, then another; and a dozen coming from that direction fell in the midst of us, scattering, from a German battery, wounds and death in a most terrible manner.

The whole of our line now hurriedly fell back, but in good order, though disheartened at the defection of some regiments of Mobiles. But a few words from their gallant leader sufficed to electrify those young soldiers. Dismounting, on seeing them hesitate, Bourbaki had thrown himself at their head, shouting: 'Follow me! Has the French infantry forgotten how to charge?' In one second, all was changed: every one heard that appeal: no one could resist it. On the side of the *Petit Magny*, *Moblots* and *Lignards* were advancing, ascending the slopes, plunging into the snow, ploughed up by shells, with a splendid *train*. The bugles were sounding the charge; the artillery growled in the direction of Lure with increasing loudness, which shewed us the 18th corps was approaching; and on the right, we could see white puffs of the shells exploding high in the air. On all sides the fusilade was beginning afresh, and with new energy. The battle, one instant lost for us, was renewed this time on the whole line. Zouaves, bounding like tigers, making use of every ridge, tree, or ditch, advanced, some shouting *Vive l'Empereur!* as they had done at the Malakoff, at Palestro, and Solferino; others singing gaily some of the quaint songs of their Algerian campaigns. There was no time to look after the dead and wounded; we did not even notice them.

When Bourbaki had met us, he had told General Ségard to put himself at the head of his division, to carry the position. We were all proud of being

once more chosen for the honourable post of danger, and, true to the old traditions of French generals—in obedience to which a commander places himself, for the charge, with the first rank of his men, and is present everywhere at the most deadly points, to lead them on by his example—our chief, followed by his staff, gallantly rode foremost of all. He cantered along the whole line, and raised his sword; and the shout, a thousand times repeated, of *Vive la France!* was heard. The impetus was grand, the enthusiasm irresistible. Then came another clamour—clamour that drowned even the din of the artillery: ‘Villersexel is ours!’ General Ségard had kept his word.

I was despatched to announce the news to our commander-in-chief. It was then five o'clock, and darkness had set in. As I galloped back, at the corner of a street I came on a regiment of Mobiles protected by a wall, and heard the voice of their colonel angrily calling upon them to advance; but they remained motionless, his prayers, his entreaties, his threats, being of no avail. Twice they had been led to the barricade on the bridge, twice they had been repulsed, leaving behind them half their numbers. The decimated ranks, the sullen looks of these men, so full of enthusiasm but a few minutes ago, shewed too well the havoc played by the grape-shot in their ranks; and now they refused to face once more the certain death that awaited them. Poor fellows! Is it to be wondered at? Had they not families to think of, wives and children anxiously waiting for their return! Had they not seen their comrades—like them, husbands, sons, and fathers, who, a short time ago, had left their homes to fight for the defence of their country—swept down like grain in the harvest-field, without a friend to convey their last adieux to their poor mothers and orphan children!

It was a case of desperation. The colonel saw that the position must be carried, but how he could not tell.

‘Have you one company on which you could rely?’ I inquired of him.

‘The 4th—mine, when I was captain.’

‘Fourth company,’ I shouted, ‘fours right, left wheel, quick march!’

Like one man, the company emerged from its position in the regiment; not one of them hesitated.

‘And now, lads,’ I added, ‘we are going to carry out what a whole regiment has been unable to do. I shall lead you myself, and I know you will not let me go alone.’ And dismounting, I drew my sword, and placed myself at their head. For some time we followed the narrow and dark street that led to the bridge, meeting on our way pale-faced and bleeding men, staggering and limping back out of the reach of the enemy's guns. I had divided my little band in two, and made them keep along the houses on both sides. I had given the order to fix bayonets, and on no account fire a shot before we reached the barricade. There it was, coming in full view as we reached the corner of the street; standing erect and silent in its grim black outline, like a breakwater before a storm. I did not give the men time to reflect on the difficulty of their task; one minute's hesitation, at the sight of the formidable obstacle they had to face, six feet from the ground, with its two guns waiting for their prey, and all would have been lost. It ought to be

carried, the general had said it; so, with a wave of my sword, and shout of ‘*En avant la 4^e!*’ we dashed forward. A loud, defiant ‘*Hoorrah!*’ answered our challenge. We were allowed to penetrate into the narrow passage that led to the enemy, then the two guns belched forth their grape-shot; the first ranks paved the way to those that followed, and we were on it—and there we remained. We had a hard struggle to keep our position; more than once I had to call to the men to remember their promise, and to encourage them when they faltered. One by one the obstacles were to be pulled down to clear a way; one by one, planks, gabions, chairs, stones, were torn to the ground. It was frightful, that hand-to-hand fight in the dark, with the yells, the imprecations, ringing through the air! I remember one of our men standing erect on a gabion, and using his rifle by the barrel, every blow of this dreadful weapon bringing down a German; whilst two others, creeping under the wheels of a cart, made good use of their bayonets. Nor can I forget the noble generosity of some others, who endeavoured to protect me with their bodies when sorely pressed by more than one foe. When at last we were on the other side, the Germans were gone, and two guns with them. Leaving a detachment at the spot, I retraced my steps in search of my general.

It was nearly eight o'clock, and on the other side of the village the Germans, as a last hope to retrieve the day, were making a stout resistance. But the firing was concentrated on two points: the château was still in their hands, as well as a block of houses sweeping all the approaches of the park. All the others had been cleared out at the point of the bayonet. Such was the ferocity of the affair, that no quarter was given on either side.

‘Well done!’ said the general, when I reported to him the success of my undertaking. ‘And now I hear the château is evacuated; so take two companies of the Mobiles of the Vosges, and put it in a state of defence. As a reward for your last action, I appoint you governor *pro tem.*’ How matters now sped, must be told in a new chapter.

THE BLOSSOMING OF AN ALOE.

CHAPTER XXVII.—MOTHER AND SON.

SIR DAVID MERVYN had thought of retiring from military life even before he left India; and after he had been for a short time at home, he made up his mind definitively to that step. His long absence, during which he had lived with economy, and his mother's careful nursing of the Barrholme property, had almost restored his fortunes. The cloud which had long covered the old place was lifted; a cloud which had gathered so heavily around his mother for many years, uncomprehended of him until after his father's death, when he read the story of her self-denying and reticent life more plainly, and with a grateful and ungrudging sympathy. Even then, he only learned results; the causes he may have guessed at, but he never knew them. The loyalty of the wife he had so cruelly wronged, so mercilessly tried, no more failed Sir Alexander Mervyn after his death than it had failed him during his life, which had come to an end without

his having learned how much too good for him she was; and his son's delicacy of feeling came in aid of that loyalty, and effectually handed over all Sir Alexander's faults and follies to oblivion. 'Our extravagance in early days,' 'Our foolishness in money matters,' and similar vague phrases, by which Lady Mervyn strove to include herself in a condemnation not to be altogether withheld, were accepted by David with a successful assumption of good faith, and that side of their business matters was not again referred to; while David took care to mark his grateful appreciation of the efforts his mother had made, and her able administration of the family affairs. Marion's portion was forthcoming at her father's death, and his credit saved with the irreproachable Græmes, who had never known the meaning of either extravagance or embarrassment in the whole course of their decorous lives. During Sir David's stay in Scotland, when he came from India on the receipt of the news of his father's death, the barrier of reserve and coldness which had for so long interposed itself between his mother and himself, was broken down, by the joint action of their common sorrow, and David's sense of the excellency of his mother's conduct. The mother and the son were drawn very closely together, during his brief stay, and possibly David might then have sold his commission, and remained in Scotland, if she had pressed him to do so. But Lady Mervyn's good sense warned her against doing this, and her never-failing self-sacrifice seconded the warning. She had known several men who had relinquished the customary active employments of their lives while yet all their powers were in full maturity, but not one who had not regretted the relinquishment, who had not been bored and sulky in consequence, who had not fallen either into bad habits or bad health. She would have been happy, indeed, if David had proposed to relinquish his military life for that of a married man, with an estate to look after; but she had no reasonable ground for hope in that direction. Her son had no agricultural tastes, and the management of affairs at Barrholme had never been in his hands, nor, indeed, within his knowledge. He had for years been only an occasional visitor there; and his stay in India had still further removed him from the interests and habits of a country gentleman's life. Lady Mervyn, who was growing old, and who realised the fact more strongly, perhaps, when she found that she bore Sir Alexander's death with comparative composure, made up her mind to the parting between herself and her son with the philosophy of age and good sense combined. All her life had been a disappointment of its best and highest hopes; she would not, by urging David to a step of which she could foresee the unwise, bring about a further disappointment. No; he must go; and she must continue her administration of his property, foreseeing the time when it should be clear of every encumbrance, her husband's memory effectually shielded from all danger of retrospective

blame, and Barrholme restored to its former importance and prosperity.

On the other point, that of David's marriage, Lady Mervyn also saw clearly the truth as it stood. The subject was not touched upon between the mother and son ever so lightly, and the most speculative and gossiping members of their society seemed to have abandoned it by common consent. There was no apparent reason for this. Sir David Mervyn was not an eccentric person in any respect; he made himself agreeable in society; and he was cheerful, good-humoured, not indolent and difficult to interest in surrounding things, as men who come home from India very often are; he liked the company of ladies, and he was a staunch friend and ally of children. The young Græmes were fond of him, and he managed them much better than their father did; and was never tired of them. Probably, not one of his relatives or friends could have accounted for the conviction which, unquestioned, possessed every one of them, that Sir David was not a marrying man. That a similar impression existed in his regiment, Lady Mervyn was not aware; but she felt convinced that he had not found any one woman, among those with whom he associated in India, more interesting than the others. It might not be so, perhaps, when he should return to India, having succeeded to his father's position; but she would not think about the matter. Everything had disappointed her hitherto, on that line of expectation, and she had abandoned it.

Sir David Mervyn passed eighteen months in Europe at the period of his father's death. During that time, the trouble of the past was never alluded to between his mother and himself, directly; and only once was an accidental reference made to it. He was with Lady Mervyn in her own room, and she was shewing him some papers which she kept in the old-fashioned bureau at the side of the fire-place. They were old letters, written to her in her girlhood, by her parents, during some temporary absence, and by Sir Alexander during their brief engagement. David looked at the orderly packets, sadly; they were so small, and faded, to contain the history of so much love, and youth, and hope, and to have so long outlasted them all.

'I shall keep them there as long as I live,' said Lady Mervyn; 'and when I am gone, I should like you to burn them yourself.'

As Lady Mervyn was about to shut in the drawer in which lay the range of packets, neatly tied, and endorsed with the names of the dead writers, and the dates of the dead time, David caught sight of a small square packet in a corner.

'Is that also a relic?' he asked.

'Yes, that is also a relic; but it is not to stay there.' She took the packet out of the drawer, opened it, and disclosed the contents—a plain, heavily-set signet-ring.

'This is your father's ring; the one he always wore; I have kept it for you. I hope you will always wear it. Put it on now.'

David obeyed her; and as he slipped the ring on the brown little finger of his left hand, his mother followed the movement with her eyes.

'I don't see the ring I gave you before you went to the Crimea,' she said; 'do you not wear it? Have you lost it?'

He replied, after a moment's hesitation, and with a change of countenance: 'I do not know where it is, mother. It was too small for me to wear with comfort, and it could not have been cut without spoiling the design. I gave it to my wife, on the day we parted; and as it was not among the few things which her sister sent to me, I don't know what has become of it. She would certainly not have lost it; in all probability, it lies in her coffin with her.'

The ice was broken. He had spoken on the subject which had been a silent one for so many years. His mother's hand was on the lock of the drawer, her head was turned towards him. She would have had to say but one word, and the only reserve now remaining between her and her son would have vanished for ever! But she did not say it. Habit was too strong with her, the habit of silence, and of the avoidance of emotion. No sudden dread of an explanation about the child was a component of the impulse which kept her silent; she remembered her a minute later, but during that first decisive one she forgot David's little dead daughter. She turned her head away, locked the drawer, and twisting the paper in which Sir Alexander's ring had been sealed up, she threw it into the fire-place. Sir David walked to the window, looked out for a little while in silence, and then saying, 'I shall take the dogs for a walk before dinner,' left the room.

The opportunity thus neglected and lost never again presented itself; and when David returned to India, Lady Mervyn ceased to think about that early episode in his life, which had made a difference between them—happily terminated now—for so long. When he returned, still unmarried, and, though he was very little over forty, with gray hair and grizzled moustache, his mother was upwards of sixty years old, and had reached a time of life at which the talent and the taste for planning alike subside. In all worldly affairs, Sir David was a fairly prosperous man, and she had fulfilled the chief purpose of her life. There were no encumbrances of any importance on the property, when, the long term of his Indian service over, its owner returned to England in 1867. A year later, the term for which Anne Cairnes had let the Tors to the Camerons expired; and before the lapse of a second, the old friends, with a new bond of interest between them, in the person of Cyril Westland, had met on the old ground. But their first meeting, to which David had looked forward, not without pleasure indeed, and of which Anne had dreamed and thought with all the immutable constancy of her fancy and her heart, did not take place until after Sir David Mervyn had ceased to be Cyril's colonel. Over the colonel's resolve to sell out, the young lieutenant lamented with persistency and loudness, which anybody except Anne would have found wearisome, but in which Anne recognised another charming trait of her boy's character. The deed was done, however; and Cyril had to console himself with the reflection, that he should see the colonel a good deal in Scotland, and that the colonel had promised to go to Bromley Park, during his (Cyril's) short leave.

'After ten years in India, with only a short leave, everything in England was perfectly strange

to me,' said Sir David to Anne, when he came to Bromley; and she had met him with that wonderful composure which women of her stamp only are capable of, composure without the smallest affectation of coldness; 'I had nothing but new ground to break. So I considered that I should be doing my nearest and most certain duty, by filling my own place in life, and putting an end to my mother's cares, and to her loneliness. So I am going to be a "laird" henceforth, and to make the old lady thoroughly happy. Of course, I shall travel a good deal, but Barrholme is to be headquarters. And I suppose we shall be neighbours sometimes, Miss Cairnes. You are not going to let the Tors again, Cyril tells me.'

Anne replied, that she had no intention of letting the Tors, and that they should, no doubt, meet sometimes. The few days which David passed at Bromley Park were memorable days to Anne Cairnes. It had sometimes occurred to her of late to ask herself whether she was not cherishing a dream; whether the ever-living love, bright and constant, fond and true, for a man whom she had not seen for six long years, in whose life she had absolutely no part, was not the memory of the only strong and occupying feeling, outside her filial affection, that had ever had a place in her heart? Was it the David Mervyn who really existed that she loved, or the memory of the young man who had been the unconscious idol of her girlhood? She strove to judge this point candidly. She said to herself: 'I shall see him as he is; I will try not to see him with the eyes that have ached for him so long. He may be quite changed; as much changed as I am, and I may find that I have lost him—him whom I never won! I could hardly have been so patient, if this were other than a dream.'

David arrived, and she saw him face to face. He was no longer the good-looking young man, with the slight martial figure, the deep, steady, blue eyes, and the dark curling hair, who had shone on her almost childish fancy, like the Prince Charming of a fairy tale; neither was he the handsome, grave, authoritative, taciturn soldier who had returned from India, with the stamp of two wars upon him, and gone away again, six years before. No; he was a cheerful, good-looking, middle-aged gentleman, who had manifestly done with soldiering, and was ready to interest himself in things in general. His hair was not thin, but it was gray; and his eyes, though they were as deep and steady as ever, had lost something of their beaming brightness. His manners were gentle and undemonstrative; but the gravity which was so remarkable when Anne had seen him last, had passed away, probably with his relief from responsibility, and he was, in a becoming way, as light-hearted as Cyril himself. When Anne found herself alone in her room, at the end of the first day of his visit, and could ask herself whether she had, in all sincerity, kept the promise she had made to herself—what was her reply to her mental inquisition? She had undrawn the curtains from before one of the large windows of her bedroom, and was standing with her arms folded upon the lowered sash, looking out upon the rose-garden, lighted by the moon at its full, and by thousands of glittering stars.

'No more than those lights of heaven are outworn delusions,' she said to herself, 'is my lifelong

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love a delusion. As the boy I remember him ; as the gallant and dutiful soldier he was when I saw him last ; as the quiet, gray-haired, dignified man he is now, I have loved, and love him ! No life is wasted wherein such a love has taken root, and held it. I thank God for my love, and for all my life !'

And David ? Seeing Anne Cairnes again face to face, what did he think about her ? Time had almost blotted out the memory of his mother's disclosure, of his own apprehensions, and the ridicule with which he had assailed himself when he recalled them years ago ; they did not recur to him, even dimly, until he had been for some days at Bromley Park. Anne was an interesting person to him, not only as an old friend, but for the sake of Cyril Westland, for whom he entertained a most cordial regard ; and whose mother struck him as one of the least estimable, and most unreal old ladies he had ever met. Sir David had the instinctive respect for age which is always allied to manliness and gentleness ; but it was not possible to respect age as represented by Mrs Westland. He could not help thinking of the extraordinary good fortune which had given to Cyril such a friend as Anne, though he could not deny that she was inclined to spoil her 'boy' a little. Anne was to him the *beau-ideal* of a happy woman, and yet he had been accustomed to follow the multitude in their notion of an 'old maid's' life. He was too sensible not to be aware of the immense difference it makes in the lot of a single woman to be rich instead of poor—a greater difference than that immense distinction effects between the individuals of any other two classes of the human race—but, even under these favourable conditions, Anne's life caused him some surprise. Wanting the great heart-centres, the deep concentrated interests implanted by instinct, cultivated by principle and affection, which marriage and maternity supply, that life was nevertheless full of the kind of happiness which comes of love and self-devotion only, of which every other kind is only a base, transient, and unsatisfying imitation. He dimly remembered to have heard slighting remarks made about the Cairneses, long ago, in Scotland ; and he wondered whether, among the people of that past time, widely dispersed now for the most part, there were any who could have filled Anne's place with greater dignity and propriety than the 'Manchester man's' daughter. How handsome she was still ! How fine and tranquil was her expression ! how graceful her carriage ! how soft and thoughtful her dark eyes ! how abundant and glossy the rich raven hair, in which there were no white threads to be seen ! Who could believe that Anne was a year older than Marion, who had ceased to have any pretensions at all to good looks, and was such a dowdy ; at least so everybody thought, except Gordon Grame ; who, fortunately, seemed to consider her quite as pretty as ever, and as well dressed. It never came into David's mind that if his Lucy had lived, she, too, would have been by this time a middle-aged woman, her girlish beauty a thing of the past. No ; to him that remembered beauty was to be a joy for ever ; the hand of time could never touch the immortal youth of the fair image in its shrine, his heart. Lucy, only, of those whom he had loved, had never suffered any change. As he had first known, and loved

her, so he had lost her ; or rather, so she dwelt with him for ever !

CHAPTER XXVIII.—NEWS FROM THE ANTIPODES.

Miss Cairnes was a kind and diligent hostess, and Cyril thought it impossible that enough could be done for the honour and gratification of his colonel ; Sir David passed his time pleasantly, and Cyril was pleased to express his approbation of everything at Bromley, after a fashion in which his silly mother saw all that was right and proper, but for which Sir David laughed at him with judicious good-humoured railing. Cyril had only two faults to find with Cousin Anne—she gave in too much to Davis, and her horses were too fat. One would think she was a dowager of the Faubourg St-Germain, Cyril protested, when she went out in state, with her barouche and bays, so mottled and dimpled with good living and little work were the horses. However, there must be some imperfections in the best regulated establishment, if only a woman be at the head of it, and Cyril graciously pardoned these. Sir David made acquaintance with all Anne's friends and *protégés*, and he silently observed and admired the great amount of good she did, and the systematic unostentatious way in which she did it. He asked her one day if she would not take him to visit her 'alms-houses,' and then bethought him that Cyril had said she did not like that phrase to be used. So he apologised for having used it, and this led to Anne's talking freely to Sir David about her Old Ladies. The next day she told him she would take him to see them ; an announcement which induced Mrs Westland, when Anne left the room, to indulge in a little satirical pity for Sir David. He received her remarks with such undisguised displeasure, that Mrs Westland's curiosity was aroused. She was a great believer in people's 'motives,' especially when they were presumably interested, or equivocal, and she felt a vivid desire to fathom the motives which inspired Sir David Mervyn with so much respect for the charitable schemes of her preposterous niece. She liked watching people, now that she was sixty, as much as she had liked watching them when she was twenty, and in this case it was just possible the interests of Cyril might be brought in question. So, from that hour, Mrs Westland watched Sir David Mervyn, and mentally ticketed him 'dangerous.'

Anne took her guest to the home of the Old Ladies, and introduced him to two of them—Miss Thorpe and Mrs Burt. When these visits had been made, she requested him to wait for her in the pony-carriage, while she went to inquire for the Old Lady at the fourth house, that one at the end of the row, where the lower window was open, and where somebody was playing the piano. Anne was a good while away, and the music, which ceased on her entering the house—probably because the player rose to welcome her—recommenced within a few minutes. When Anne came out of the house, and David got out of the pony-carriage, to hand her in, she said : 'I am sorry I could not take you to see Mrs Allen ; but she is quite an invalid. A strange gentleman would flurry her dreadfully. Indeed, she has not left her room to-day.'

He did not reply, and she saw that he was

grave and sad. When they had turned out of the street, he said : 'Who was playing that old-fashioned music so beautifully ?'

'Ah,' said Anne, smiling, 'I am so glad you noticed it ! That was Mary Allen. She will be a great piano-player one of these days ; I consider her wonderful playing now—she is only sixteen.'

'Indeed !' said Sir David vaguely, and Anne doubted whether he had heard what she said.

This little incident occurred during the last days of Sir David's stay at Bromley Park. Very shortly afterwards, Anne's guests left her—Cyril and his mother for London, Sir David for Barrholme ; and Anne was left to a mental review of the events which had just taken place, and their effect upon herself. Though David's presence had been a blessing to her beyond price, so keenly felt, that she had sometimes, patient as she was, wondered how she had endured the years during which that 'shadow of a great rock in a weary land' had never been vouchsafed to her ; she did not feel his absence such a blank as a younger woman, or a woman who had less to do for other people, would have felt it. The awful distance divided them no longer ; it had become possible to see him ; above all, she was secure now in the possession of her treasure ; it was verily he himself, the man as he then was, whom she loved with all her heart ; it was neither a fancy nor a memory.

The second meeting between Anne Cairnes and Sir David took place in Scotland, when a party was assembled at Barrholme for partridge-shooting purposes in the autumn. Cyril had a choice selection of guests at the Tors, and Anne enjoyed his pleasure and importance. It was a pleasant and lively time ; the old friends had much to talk over ; and Lady Mervyn, though her former projects had vanished into forgetfulness, made much of Anne Cairnes. Anne never remembered to have seen Lady Mervyn in such good spirits. She was enjoying the sense of relief from the burden which had weighed heavily upon her life for so many years—that of unsatisfactory money matters. The sale of Sir David's commission had set everything completely right ; henceforth, she should never have anything to hide, or anything to fear. Her daughter, and even her grandchildren, noticed how much Lady Mervyn was altered, since Sir David had left the army, and come home to her for good, and how much pleasure she took in the society of Anne Cairnes. No incident of any such importance as to require record occurred at either of the homes with which this story is concerned, until the following summer, when the same day on which Mrs Allen died at the home of Miss Cairnes's Old Ladies brought to Sir David Mervyn a communication which once more called up before him the long-dead past.

This communication was a letter, inclosed to him by his former army agents, Messrs Cox and Greenwood, to whose care it was directed ; and Sir David saw, with much surprise, that it bore the postmark of Melbourne, Victoria. He had no friends, no correspondents at the antipodes. Mrs Ferris had indeed written to him once, at his request, to announce the safe arrival of herself and her husband at Sydney, and their kind and cordial reception by her brother, John Grainger ; and he had acknowledged her letter. But no correspondence had since taken place between Sir David Mervyn and Mrs Ferris. It was quite natural that such

should be the case. The difference between Mrs Ferris and her sister Lucy had been so complete and so radical, that she had never felt drawn towards Lucy's husband by sympathy strong enough to make up for the social distance between them ; and when she had done her duty to her dead sister, and to the child, who followed her mother so soon, Mrs Ferris felt no more inclined than she was entitled to keep up formal connection between 'the captain' and herself. Poor Lucy's unequal marriage had brought death to herself, and sorrow to them all ; it was over ; there was an end of it ; and it was useless to keep up communication with him who had been Lucy's husband. If there was some pride in this, there was also good sense ; and Mrs Ferris had so worded her last letter to David that he perfectly understood it to be a kindly and respectful farewell. During the years which had since elapsed, he occasionally remembered Mrs Ferris, and idly wondered whether she and her husband had done well ; whether they were alive or dead ; whether any one of the party whom he had seen in the old farmhouse, where he had gone to meet his fate—the love that had so brightened his life, which had left it so dark afterwards, when death came and snatched it from him—was still above ground, English or antipodean, except himself. Of late, however, all remembrance of the Ferrises had faded away ; and the letter from the distant colony, with the address, to the care of the army agents, 'to be forwarded,' made no distinct impression upon Sir David's mind.

He broke the seal, and found that the contents of the envelope consisted of two sheets, each written by a different person. A narrow strip of paper was folded round one, on which these words were written : 'Sir David Mervyn is requested to read the inclosed letter first.' Sir David accordingly opened the sheet of paper, and read as follows :

COLLINS STREET, MELBOURNE, May 1871.

SIR—I have the honour to inform you that, in obedience to the instructions of my late client, Mr John Grainger, I forward the accompanying letter, which was written by him a week prior to his death, which took place yesterday at the above address. I shall be happy to receive any instructions with which you may wish to favour me, and to furnish any information which you may require.—I am, sir, yours, &c.

JAMES HECKETT (Solicitor).

'Late client ! John Grainger ! Lucy's brother !' said Sir David, pausing before he opened the second letter. 'So he is gone. I had almost forgotten his existence. How came the poor fellow to write to me ?'

Then he read John Grainger's letter—read it with surprise, growing into incredulous astonishment.

MELBOURNE, May 1871.

DEAR BROTHER-IN-LAW—I do not know whether this will reach you in life ; but if not, it will not matter, as it can do no one but yourself either good or harm. I am a dying man—dying of consumption, like my mother, and my sister Lucy, your wife. I have been a rich man for a long time, and I have neither wife nor child. I made a good deal of money before my sister Ferris and her husband came out to Sydney ; and I left them

there to keep the ball rolling which I had set on the roll, and came to Victoria, to the gold-fields, where I was very successful; as I have also been since then, in trade, at Melbourne. But all things have an end, and mine is near, and the last business I have to do will come to its end when I sign my name to this letter. I have settled all my worldly affairs, and made my will. Besides the land in Sydney which I leave, as justice requires, to my sister Ferris, who is the last of us left alive, I have twenty-five thousand pounds to dispose of; and of this money I have bequeathed to you, by my will, one-half the share that should have been Lucy's or her child's after her, if she or the child had lived to take it. She has the same claim upon me dead as living—the claim to her half of what I have to leave, except the land, which must go to my sister Ferris, because she and her husband have earned that difference. You were a good husband to Lucy; and if this money had come to her, she would have left it to you; therefore, I leave it to you. I do not know anything about you since you left the army, and have been no more mentioned in English newspapers; but we were very proud of you distinguishing yourself so much, on Lucy's account. I do not leave the sum I have named (twelve thousand five hundred pounds) to your heirs, in case this should not find you in life; it would be unjust to do so, since they are not kin to me, or to Lucy; and I say this to avoid any trouble or anxiety to other people into whose hands a letter intended for you might fall. In that case, I have provided that the entire sum of twenty-five thousand pounds shall go to my sister Ferris, who may dispose of it as she pleases, for she also has no children. The good old family of the Graingers—I never heard of any disgrace or dishonesty among them—will come to its end with her. I don't wish to lay any yoke upon you, because it might be unpleasant to you, and a good dog wouldn't thank one for a muzzle of gold; but I should like to think that if the old farm is to be had when you get the money paid over to you, you would buy it, or rent it, and put some one, not too new-fangled, but trustworthy, into it. But I say again, this is not a condition—it is only a fancy. I never had one before. My will is in the possession of the person who will inclose this letter to you with the announcement of my death, by the first mail after that event. I hope you will have no trouble in realising the bequest I make to you; there ought to be none, for the money is in government securities, and my sister Ferris, who knows the terms of my will, is my executrix. The doctor does not give me a long day; the dust-storms are against me; but for as short or as long a time as I last, I am, dear brother-in-law, yours truly,

JOHN GRAINGER.

It was some time before Sir David Mervyn realised what had happened to him; he had so utterly forgotten the commonplace, rather surly man, whose conduct in the matter of his sister's marriage had been coarsely candid and matter-of-fact; all the past had grown so indistinct. But when he thoroughly comprehended the meaning of this letter, there awoke within him, after long years, a strong yearning pang of love and grief for the beautiful young wife of his youth, of late, a pale and placid phantom—for her who had given him her love; and for love of him, her life, for whose sake this fortune was coming to him from

the ends of the earth—a pang of that blind, helpless, yet rebellious anguish which has been once put into words:

Oh, my love! my own, own love!
My love, who loved me so!
Is there never a chink in the world above,
Where they listen to words from below?

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

As was predicted when the series of annual International Exhibitions was commenced at South Kensington, they have not proved successful. Notwithstanding that select and classified works have been exhibited, once a year has proved fatal. In these days of concentrated life and enterprise, once a year comes round too often either for promoters or for sight-seers. The promoters find that the enormous trouble is not adequately rewarded or appreciated, and the sight-seers, no longer allured by the charm of novelty, cease to take pleasure in sight-seeing, and confess themselves weary. Though this may be a disappointment, it is not to be regretted; for art and manufacture will not stand still though they be not brought into a great show once a year; and if an exhibition be held once in five or ten years, then the shillings of the millions will be forthcoming once more to repay the expenses.

Meanwhile, preparations are making for exhibitions in the provinces and other countries. In Chili, an 'international exposition' is to be opened at Santiago in September 1875; and Philadelphia is busy with preparations for the centenary exhibition of 1876, which is to celebrate at once the independence of the United States, and the art, industry, and manufactures of America, and of all other countries that may be willing to exhibit.

Would it be possible to have an exhibition of steamboats? If so, the *Hassler* of the U. S. navy would be worth examination, for we learn from a report on the vessel's performance made to the Superintendent of the U. S. Coast Survey, that she is fitted with 'compound engines,' which require but a small consumption of coal, and that she has steamed day after day during two months at a speed of eight knots an hour, and has not burned more than 1891 pounds of coal in the twenty-four hours.

There are many parts of the United Kingdom where water-power runs to waste: perhaps there is not room for buildings in the immediate neighbourhood; or the expense of a canal, to lead the water to a suitable site, would be too great. Hence it happens, in the mining districts, that the transmission of power is effected by means of long shafts and other contrivances involving great outlay and great friction. But all this heavy machinery may be dispensed with, and the water-power may be transmitted to long distances by means of a light wire-rope, at a fifteenth or twentieth of the cost of belts and shafting. How this is done may be learned from a paper published by the Institution of Mechanical Engineers (Newhall Street, Birmingham), in which the author, Mr H. M. Morrison of Manchester, states that this new process has been named 'telodynamic transmission,' and that it 'consists in the use of a pulley of large diameter, set in very rapid motion; and this, by means of a light wire-rope of small size, drives another pulley of equal diameter placed at a

distance; and thus the power is continued forwards to any distance as may be required.'

The loss by friction is very small, not more than two and a half per cent. Where intermediate supporting pulleys are made use of, the loss is more; but the calculation has been made, that in transmitting a hundred and twenty horse-power to a distance of twelve and a half miles, there would still remain ninety horse-power available. To do the same amount of work by metal-shafting would require three thousand tons' weight of iron. Another advantage of the wire-rope method is, that the direction of the transmission can be changed at pleasure.

This method is largely employed in the United States; and at Schaffhausen, and in other places on the continent, is worked at a cost forty per cent. below the cost of steam; and at lead-mines near Oporto, where the entrance of the mine is a mile from the river, the water-power is not only transmitted to that distance, but is carried over a hill on the way. Far-sighted mechanicians have at times pointed out the enormous resources which could be developed out of water-power, and here we have an instalment thereof. How small an instalment it is will become apparent in the days when the rise and fall of the tides shall be made to do the work now done by thousands of steam-engines.

Another invention described at a meeting of the same Institution should interest all persons engaged in mining, or in the excavation of stone. It is Darlington's Rock Drill, which has no valve, and no substitute for a valve, whereby endless trouble, and the cost and delay of perpetual repairs, are got rid of. Simple as this machine is, it will strike from six hundred to a thousand blows a minute, and in that space of time will drill holes in hard granite from two inches to seven inches deep. 'The machine,' says the describer, 'is its own guide; for if the advance is too slow to keep pace with the drill, the piston calls attention by striking the front end of the cylinder; and if too fast, the machine stops, in consequence of the exhaust being prevented, and will only start again by turning the feeding-screw. It is, therefore, almost impossible that a workman of ordinary intelligence should fail to learn this part of his duty by an hour's practice.'

A communication by Professor Osborne Reynolds to the Manchester Philosophical Society, 'On the Extent and Action of the Heating Surface for Steam-boilers,' is an attempt to determine by experiment the amount of heat transmitted from one fluid to another through an intervening plate of metal. In the economy of a steam-boiler, the question is one of essential importance, seeing that it involves the further question, How can the waste of heat be controlled? It is commonly supposed that the heat inside of a boiler-tube is the same as that of the boiling-water by which it is surrounded; but after making a series of experiments, Professor Reynolds has come to the conclusion, that the air passing through a tube does not rise to 21°, even when the tube is surrounded by boiling-water; and that the greater the velocity of the air, the lower will be its temperature. The subject is to be pursued until definite results shall be arrived at, and then, as the professor remarks, 'we shall be able to determine, as regards length and extent, the best proportion for the tubes and flues of boilers.'

An account has been given to the same Society of fossil bones discovered near Castleton, in the Peak country of Derbyshire. In a rock basin which had become filled up with loam, a 'wonderful agglomeration' of bones and teeth of bison, reindeer, bears, and wolves was met with. The supposition is, that the spot was a swampy drinking-place in the primeval ages, lying on the track from the valley of the Derwent to the plains of Cheshire. It is probable that large herds of bison and reindeer passed the spot: in drinking, some would fall in; some would be bogged; others might die in the vicinity, and be washed in during rainy weather. The bears and the wolves probably attended to eat up the sickly ones and stragglers, just as they do now in Siberia and in the great prairies on the flanks of the Rocky Mountains. This is what geologists say on the subject. Any one desiring to judge for himself will find the place near Windy Knoll Quarry.

Dr Braithwaite has investigated the structure of plants, the interdependence of the several parts, the various forms of cells, and the phenomena of growth, and has discovered what any sincere worker may discover—that there is always something fresh to find out in the products of nature. As regards cells, the doctor remarks, each variety is so constructed as best to fulfil its special function. 'Where freedom and quickness of circulation are required, as in the milk-vessels of such plants as the sow-thistle, lettuce, and celadine, the walls are thin, and all obstructing partitions are removed; on the other hand, where strength is needed, as in so many fibres used in our manufactures, deposit goes on in the interior until hardly any central space is left; and if firmness and resistance are required, this deposit becomes so indurated as to give the qualities we value in such woods as oak, mahogany, box, and ebony; while even in them provision is made for interchange of air and fluids by a beautiful system of pores and canals.'

Mr D. Hanbury, F.R.S., in co-operation with Professor Flückiger of the University, Strassburg, has published a *Pharmacographia*, giving a *History of the Principal Drugs of Vegetable Origin, met with in Great Britain and British India*. This book is what it purports to be, and cannot fail to be useful, for the authors have spared no pains in its preparation. They give scales and tables to facilitate comparisons of measurement and of temperature, and, under each subject treated of, they make known the botanical origin—the history—the description—the microscopic structure—the chemical composition—the uses, and the adulterations of the several plants comprehended in the scheme of the book. From this summary, a fair notion may be formed of the large amount of information conveyed in seven hundred pages.

Among papers read at the meeting of the British Association was one on the *Jute Plant, and its Use as a Textile Material*. In some respects, jute has a great advantage over flax. It is used as a substitute for hair, can be fashioned into chignons, is manufactured into 'silk' hats, into paper, and into stair-carpets which can be sold at threepence a yard, and into bed-quilts. Since the opening of the Suez Canal a cargo of jute can be shipped from India to Dundee, can be spun and woven, and sent back to India within six months.

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small quantities of earth and moss from the crevices in the pavement of that city, discovered therein wheel animalcula, Rotifers, which after being moistened shewed signs of life, and exhibited their usual movements. He then exposed a number of the little creatures to sunshine and a temperature of eighty degrees during a whole afternoon, and found that after such a thorough drying not one of them revived. It thus appears that Rotifers will survive a moderate degree of dryness, and may rest in the earth until returning waters restore them to activity.

Professor Dana of Boston has published a new edition of his *Manual of Geology*, in which he proposes to distinguish the first era in geological history as 'Archæan time,' and to substitute this term for the term Azoic, which has been long in use. Since the discovery of the Eozoon, some geologists have suggested Eozoic, as more in accordance with fact; but it has not yet been sufficiently proved that the Eozoon ever was a living creature, and therefore Archæan, signifying *beginning-time*, may be adopted as a conveniently descriptive term, until discovery and experience shall have produced a better.

A fact well worth taking note of is mentioned in recent news from India: a railway has been opened in Jeypoor, and the first railway locomotive that ever entered the territory was driven by the Maharajah (Great King) himself, who is described as one of the most public-spirited among the chiefs of the empire. This implies that not only is there progress in material things, but that moral progress is overcoming the crushing superstition of caste. Another fact is, that steps are taken for the establishment of English cotton-spinneries in some of the towns on the western coast of India; and yet another, namely, that in the North-western Provinces, in July last, 686 persons died from the bites of snakes and other wild animals.

In the Registrar-general's weekly Report published in the third week of October, a comparison was given of the health of London and of other towns. The average mortality in London was 21 per 1000. In Bradford, it was 24; in Leeds, 25; in Leicester, Sheffield, and Oldham, 26; in Manchester, 31; in Hull, 32; in Liverpool, 36; and in Newcastle-on-Tyne, 37. In Portsmouth, it was 17; and in Norwich, 19. In Copenhagen and Christania, it was 28; in Munich, 29; in Breslau, 30; in Berlin, 34. In Philadelphia, the rate was 17, and in New York, 27 per 1000. Berlin is one of the most malodorous and worst-drained cities of Europe, which accounts for the high rate of mortality indicated by the foregoing figures.

Mr Selwyn, Director of the Geological Survey of Canada, states in an official Report that the first range of prairie-land west of Red River is uniformly rich and fertile; that even on the shallow soils cattle 'thrive admirably'; and 'that if a hardy race of cattle were introduced, they would speedily become acclimated, and not only survive, but would thrive through the winter without the aid of artificial feeding and shelter.' If this were carried out, a few years would see those vast regions occupied by herds of kine rivalling in numbers the once swarming herds of bisons.

It is worth notice, that in some parts of that North-west Territory the rainfall has diminished, and springs have dried up. The explanation is

supposed to be, that large breadths of forest have been destroyed by fire; and Mr Selwyn remarks that there is scarcely a square mile in all the country between Red River and the Rocky Mountains which has not at some time been the scene of a conflagration. The Canadians will therefore, following the example set in some parts of the United States, have to betake themselves to planting; then, in the course of a generation, they may hope to see a sufficient rainfall.

After reading this, we turn with the more interest to particulars of British rainfall; concerning which we learn, from the meteorologists, that nature has been making up in a plentiful way for the dryness of the three months, May, June, July. At Dublin, on the 13th August, more than three inches of rain fell in eight hours. At Torrington, Devon, the rainfall of the whole month was five and a half inches; at Galway, it was more than five; and at Banff, more than six inches. The difference between east and west is remarkable. An inch and a half fell in Essex in August, and somewhat less than two inches at Grimsby in September. But at Borrowdale (Lake District) in September, the rainfall amounted to sixteen inches; at Portree, it was thirteen and three-quarter inches; at Bodmin, and at Skipton, a little over seven inches. We may expect to hear that even greater quantities have fallen in October.

In the last volume of *Transactions* published by the Royal Medical and Chirurgical Society, cases are recorded which prove that aneurism can be cured without an operation, by regulating the amount of food, and keeping the patient in a lying-down position for a sufficient time. Cures have been effected by this means which, a few years ago, would have been treated by the knife, with great risk to the patient, and perhaps crippling him through the rest of his life. In these instances, the surgeon now stands by, and sees that nature has fair play, and nature effects the cure by converting the contents of an aneurismal sac into solid fibrine. Mr Jolliffe Tufnell, the author of the paper above alluded to, states that 'if the plan of treatment by position be but steadily and perseveringly carried out, a successful issue can (in suitable cases) almost be guaranteed.' And he describes 'suitable cases' as 'those in which the aneurism springs from the front of the aorta, where the sac is entire, and the individual possesses a fibrinating power in his blood.'

CHILDREN I HAVE MET.

IN THREE CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER III.

WHEN I wrote that I had my doubts about the adoption of Rosey and Tosey as our own children, it must not be understood that I entertained any idea of parting with them unless I should be compelled to do so; I ought rather to have written that I had my fears. It seemed too good to be true that these little darlings should have come to us so unexpectedly, like a Christmas box, and that we were to keep them for our own for ever.

The advertisement of their arrival had been already sent to the newspapers, and would doubtless elicit some reply, if not from their father, at least from those who had a better claim to their custody than ourselves. As to Gibbins, I was inclined to disbelieve in him as an entity altogether.

Dodo had probably stretched her imagination to its utmost limits in inventing him. She was compelled to tell the children that somebody would meet them at the end of their aimless journey, and she had called him Gibbins, a name which had at least the merit of being easily pronounceable. It was from their father that I chiefly feared molestation. I pictured him to myself as a selfish miscreant, who, without any natural affection for his offspring, might nevertheless resent their adoption by other people; or, if he found that we were really fond of them, might make use of his relationship to extort money by threat of demanding their custody. This would be a state of affairs which indeed 'would never wash,' and yet we should be powerless to avert it.

However, as time went on, and the advertisement remained unanswered, and no one put in a claim for Rosey and Tosey, we began to have an unmitigated enjoyment in the possession of them. Being an idle man, and also because I had been hitherto a childless one, I gave myself up to them more than grown men generally do; I deny that I spoilt them—indeed, whoever yet confessed to such a charge? People did say, indeed, that I indulged them considerably; but, in return, they indulged *me* in many ways, and especially with ungrudging opportunities of observation of their manners and habits, thoughts and small-talk, logic and feelings. These formed the prettiest study conceivable; all Lilliput life was laid before me, with its springs and wires, and I am bound to say that I suffered no disenchantment by being admitted 'behind the scenes.' If the actors had been two boys, or two girls, it might have been otherwise, but with these two there were no jealousies, no jars, no quarrels. They were avoided in this manner: Tosey had everything his own way, and Rosey ministered to his pleasure. Her self-abnegation was complete; it was not 'ask and have,' because she anticipated his wants: her greatest trouble was when she was compelled to refuse him anything upon the ground that it would disagree with him; for all his desires were fixed on something to eat, and it was generally unwholesome. Not for a moment would I have it imagined that Tosey was a glutton—

But Knowledge to his eyes its ample page,
Rich with the spoils of Time, had not unrolled.

Science, Literature, and Art were for the present dead to him, and what had he to do but to eat? Many a discreet old gentleman who has retired from active life makes the same excuse with less reason; and as to selfishness, one does not consider a king to be selfish (and far less do we call him so), because he takes everything he wants without inquiring into the miserable details of how it is procured: it is enough that he is graciously pleased to accept it from his devoted subjects. Moreover, it was by right divine—the genuine majesty of Love—that Prince Tosey ruled us. His nature was affectionate to an extreme degree, and his temper was flawless; some detractors said, indeed, that this last was never tried—that we pronounced it perfect; as one might praise a bridge that has never been crossed; but my wife and I despised such remarks. The dear child had a desire for having his own way which was far superior to caprice: it rose to genius. I happened to be present on a certain occasion when he said his nightly prayers, as

usual at the dictation of his sister; when she got to 'Thy will be done,' he declined to repeat that sentence, and moved an amendment. 'No,' lisped he; 'my will be done, not *thy* will: it is Tosey's choose this time.' A revelation of human nature to its very depths! How many of us, who are ten times his age, echo his infant thought, though not in words! It took all Rosey's eloquence and theology to convince him that this matter was not one of alternation and equality.

As for her, no such audacious ideas had ever intruded into her sweet thoughts; she was the most humble and reverent of human creatures, and while entertaining the quickest sense of injustice as respected others, never imagined that to be a wrong which interfered with her own wishes. As a teacher of religion and morals, she was, in fact, without peer. But she would doubtless have failed as a certificated school-mistress—her grammar was original, infinitely superior, in my opinion, to that of the most well-informed persons, but it rejected the rules of syntax. Her sentences—probably from her entire freedom from egotism—began with 'me' instead of 'I,' and her pronunciation was far from distinct. A curious result of this latter peculiarity of his teacher came out in Tosey. When he had grown many months older, and was kneeling at mum-mum's knees (she was always 'Mum-mum' now with him, and I was Da-da, just as it should be), she detected in his devotions a certain roll in the word 'Hallowed.' What he did say, was in fact, Harold—'Harold be thy name.' 'But, my dear child, what does that mean?' 'I don't know,' replied Tosey, frankly, 'but I thought that made it more sense.' A Lesson for Fathers (and mothers) much more significant, I venture to think, and worthy of parental attention, than is contained in Wordsworth's poem of the Gilded Vane.

The philosophy of Tosey's character, discernible on our first acquaintance, became so marked as often to be embarrassing. He would pass hours in silent speculation, and evolve therein theories of the most startling character, and which struck at the root of everything. Indeed, some of them were so natural, as well as tremendous, that they were utterly unanswerable. It took all I knew, and more, to evade his inquiries. He would lay his tiny finger upon the anomalies of the scheme of creation with the most ruthless accuracy, though, it must be acknowledged, that, like some objectors of a larger growth, his propositions for amendment and reform were crude enough. He was cross-examining me upon one occasion on the nature of conscience, which (perhaps from its inquisitive character) he assumed to be of the feminine gender.

'She knows everything, Da-da, does she?'

'Yes, Tosey.' I always confined myself as much as possible to generalities, for if Tosey once drove you into a corner, it was all over with you.

'And she is everywhere, is she?'

'Well, yes; she is everywhere, Tosey.'

'Then she's in this ink-bottle, and I've corked her up—so we'll have no more of Miss Conscience.'

It was impossible to explain to him that that very desirable consummation is not so easily effected; though I am sure, if Conscience ever troubled Tosey, she must have done it out of revenge for this attempt to limit her sphere of action, and not in the way of duty.

The most touching speech (save one) that I can call to mind from this child's tongue was on the occasion of his nurse, Elizabeth, leaving our service to better herself (as she sanguinely expected) by matrimony. It was arranged beforehand that no actual 'good-bye' should take place, lest it should harrow the child's feelings, and the attendant that was to succeed her had for some time been living in the house, in order to accommodate herself to the children's ways. But when the evening arrived on which his Elizabeth was not to return, an explanation of some sort became unavoidable. It was broken to him that for that night the new hand was to put him to bed. 'What!' said Tosey, 'that strange ooman! Nedder, nedder!'

In vain it was urged that the arrangement should be only temporary. Tosey was quite unappeasable, and I received a request to come upstairs in person to the nursery. There I found him, arrayed in his tiny great-coat, and his little hat, evidently bent on a night-journey. It was about the time in winter that he had first come to us, and a thick fog reigned out of doors, yet he was determined to find his Elizabeth. 'Da-da,' said he, 'I must go to my dear Lizzy. Only tell me this: shall I turn to the right hand, or shall I turn to the left, when I get out at the door?'

Conceive the determination of that small child, and picture him, in the wild waste of wintry London, looking for his lost friend, whom he only knew by her Christian name, shortened for love and euphony. I confess the spectacle almost upset me (as for my wife, she was crying worse than he was), and if I could have inveigled Elizabeth from the arms of her bridegroom, I am afraid I should have done it. As it was, Rosey's tender eloquence, combined with a judicious application of 'pigs' of oranges, persuaded him to retire to rest; and ten days afterwards, when his Lizzy came to see him, she was half broken-hearted to see how easily he had transferred his affections to her substitute. 'I love all peepy' (people), was Tosey's boast, 'and all peepy loves me.'

And certainly everybody did love him who had the privilege of his intimate acquaintance: his very foibles assumed such a pleasant guise, that they were attractive; and even his childish selfishness had a humour about it which half redeemed the fault. It was necessary to impress upon him that he was always to give way to ladies, and so he did (for he was obedience itself), but it went against the grain; with Rosey especially, who was for giving way to him in everything, he found it difficult to practise these Chesterfield manners. On one occasion, the two children amused themselves by changing clothes: Rosey became a shy, retiring boy of heavenly loveliness; and Tosey, a brilliant girl, not without a dash of that '*beauté du diable*' which is ascribed to some of the softer sex. They hurried into our room to admire themselves in the pier-glass, and Tosey pushed Rosey aside with this remark: 'Ladies first, if you please, dear.' He was at that time, so far as we could calculate, about five years old; as clever as John Stuart Mill at the same age, if not so learned, and with fifty times the fun of that philosopher at any period of his life. Rosey was not so intelligent, though full of practical good sense, guided by an exquisite tenderness. 'I do not understand—I love,' might have been her

motto. In all those questions of theology and philosophy which Tosey tackled as readily as a navvy a wheel-barrow, her curiosity was tempered with humility.

On one occasion, when we were about to be driven out of our London house by the painters and cleaners, and there had been, as usual, much domestic debate about our seaside plans, Rosey inquired confidentially: 'Where do the people in heaven go to, Da-da, when *that* is being white-washed?'

Sometimes the child would administer an unconscious reproof: 'I heard you say, Da-da, that Mr Jones was a brute, the other day; how could *that* be, when he is a man?'

Rosey's conversations and remarks were of course very ridiculous, but to *me* at least I confess they were infinitely better than amusing. To Rosey and Tosey I was the interpreter of nature, and the high-priest of the mysteries of life, and they came to me to unravel all the tangled skein. The position was embarrassing and full of responsibility, but my occupation of it endeared them to me more than words can tell. To feel that they were dependent upon me for everything, and so confident of the best being done for them that could be done by word and deed, was to strengthen the claim they had upon my love by fifty-fold. They had changed all the ways of home for my wife and me, and given it light and colour. The patter of their little feet above our heads, their childish glee and chatter, made music where before had been a brooding silence. They made the cheerful morning brighter by their presence: the livelong day more teemed with life because of them; the evening, when we had seen them in their beds and kissed their eyelids, was more full of calm content. To have said we were rewarded for having taken pity upon them in their friendliness and desertion, would have been to say little indeed. They had taken pity upon *us*, rather; enlivened our solitude, and dowered us with undreamt-of joys.

After a few months, the fear of their father coming to claim his own faded clean away from our fond hearts, and left them free for those two children's names; and they will be found engraved there when we are dead.

Only at times, as a secret writing is brought out on a sudden by the fire, the terror of such a blow would be evoked for a brief space, to fade away again like the effects of a nightmare.

It was just three years after the children had come to us, that Tosey began to exhibit certain signs of delicacy; there was nothing very wrong with him, nor could the ailment be identified with any particular disease, but the doctor said he 'wanted care.' Heaven knows, care was taken of him, but yet he didn't seem to mend. We kept him close in-doors that winter weather, but sorely against his will; he was up at the window half the day, looking out upon the falling snow and the white world that lay all around us. One day some men came by with the usual cry: 'We are all froze out,' and Tosey was lavish with his pence as usual. 'It must be worse to be frozen *out*,' he observed, 'than to be frozen *in*, as I am;' and then, after a long pause: 'If the men can't dig because the ground is so hard, how will they dig my grave, mum-mum, when I come to die?'

His words, I could see, went through my poor wife's heart, and her only answer was to strain

him to her bosom, as though death itself were already about to snatch him from her. At the same moment, the door was softly opened, and Rosey slipped out of the room; I followed her, but paused at her chamber door, for I could hear her crying as though her little heart would break, and, alas, I had no comfort for her! It was evident that she had wished not to distress us by the sight of that grief, of which Tosey's simple speech had opened the flood-gates. The fear of losing him had been, I felt sure, in her inmost thoughts for weeks, as it had also been in ours, though we had not dared to speak of it; but it had been intermittent; henceforth the shadow was upon us from that hour. Not that Tosey grew greatly worse, or that the doctor took a more serious view of his case; but our presentiment of woe was stronger than our faith in science. As the child's strength and spirits failed him—which they did very gradually, though to our loving eyes not imperceptibly—his affections appeared to grow stronger for us all; but they concentrated themselves upon his beloved Rosey.

'It almost seems,' whispered my wife, 'as though he feels he is about to leave her, and grudges every moment they spend apart.'

Perhaps it was so; Heaven only knew; but in my heart was a terror too great for utterance; a fear that those two might not be parted, but that Rosey's gentle spirit might take its flight with his. It seemed to me that the girl could never outlive her brother—that they were flowers upon a single stem. The doctor, to whom I secretly communicated this apprehension, treated it with scorn: the girl was delicate, he said, but there was no organic disease, such as he had by this time begun to suspect in the boy's case. The affections of children, however powerful, were evanescent; and I should one day give Rosey away with my own hands as the bride of some honest young fellow. Heaven knows, that I tried hard to believe him.

It was spring-time, and Tosey was still with us, and could even go out of doors in an open carriage; but he had to be lifted in and out—a burden that grew lighter every day. It was piteous to see him failing and fading, when every tree was putting forth its leaf, and every plant its blossom. I never smell the May-flowers now, nor see their snowy masses, without recalling Tosey's delight in them upon that day—the last in which he ever saw them. Once, as he passed a field so thick with buttercups that it looked like a veritable Field of the Cloth of Gold, he asked to get out and go among them; and when we reminded him of his weakness, he answered contentedly: 'All right—and what a soft and tender phrase he made of that 'All right!' 'It wouldn't be much good, for, you see, I should be afraid to put my foot upon them.' Tosey did not know that the poet had written—

A lover would not tread
A cowslip on the head,
Though he should dance from eve to peep of day,

but spoke from a heart all gentleness and pity. It could be said of him, as it can be said of few children, 'He never hurt a fly'; and yet what a pang he gave us, more sharp, and bitter, and lasting than any sword-thrust, when he said that night, as we laid him in his cot: 'I don't think I shall ever play about in my little nursery again.'

He never did: he left us within that week,

and he took Rosey with him. It was not to be expected—I never did expect it—that she who had come from heaven to be his guardian angel upon earth, should remain here when her mission had been accomplished. We had been up all night with him, but towards morning he had fallen asleep, and we had left him with his nurse and Rosey. If he moved, if he sighed, if he breathed a deeper breath than usual, that child would spring noiselessly out of bed, and be at his side in an instant. The nurse was watchful too, after her kind, but it is Love alone that has the fine ear. What gentle shock dissolved soul from body, we know not—perhaps he did but lisp his sister's name; but Rosey heard it. We found them in the early morning locked in one another's arms, both dead. *Their Father had come for them at last.*

So ended the one romance of our unromantic home; but the memory of it abides with us both, and will ever do so. It was never cleared up in any way. Who Dodo was, or where those darlings came from, we still know not. We only know—and for certain—where they are gone to. We do not regret that our Christmas Box (as Nelly used to call them) was given to us, only to be taken away again so soon; we have the comfort of it even now. Moreover, we dare to think that we shall one day see them again. There will be change in us, but surely not in them. My Rosey's face will have the Light from the Presence upon it, but it will be the same face; for it was always that of an angel.

A M O R N I N G S O N G.

I WAKE this morn, and all my life
Is freshly mine to live;
The future with sweet promise rife,
And crowns of joy to give.
New words to speak, new thoughts to hear,
New love to give and take;
Perchance new burdens I may bear,
For love's own sweetest sake.
New hopes to open in the sun,
New efforts worth the will,
Or tasks with yesterday begun
More bravely to fulfil.
Fresh seeds for all the time to be,
Are in my hand to sow,
Whereby, for others and for me,
Undreamed-of fruit may grow.
In each white daisy 'mid the grass
That turns my foot aside,
In each uncurling fern I pass,
Some sweetest joy may hide.
And if, when eventide shall fall
In shade across my way,
It seems that nought my thoughts recall
But life of every day;
Yet if each step in shine or shower
Be where Thy footstep trod,
Then blessed be every happy hour
That leads me nearer God.

On Saturday, January 2, 1875, will be commenced
in this JOURNAL, a NOVEL, entitled

W A L T E R ' S W O R D.
By the Author of *At Her Mercy*.

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